

Message Text

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ORIGIN ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /011 R

6611

DRAFTED BY: ACDA/IR:REINHORN

APPRVED BY: ACDA/IR:AFLOYD

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R 120111Z JUL 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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FOR TTB/PNE DEL

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 161181 ACTION GENEVA 9 JULY.

QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:PARM TECH, CCD, US

SUBJECT: CCD: US STATEMENT ON ARMS CONTROL IMPLICATIONS
OF PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS

DISTO

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY US REPRESENTATIVE AT CCD PLENARY JULY 10.

BEGIN TEXT

1. SINCE EARLY IN THE NUCLEAR AGE, CONSIDERATION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO UTILIZING THE UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS FOR PEACEFUL AS WELL AS MILITARY PURPOSES. HOWEVER, FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS--INCLUDING THE ADDITION LAST YEAR OF A SIXTH STATE WITH A NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE CAPABILITY--THE QUESTION OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS FOR PEACEFUL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BILITY, THE PRESSING WORLDWIDE NEED TO EXPLOIT NEW SOURCES OF ENERGY, AGREEMENT ON THE THRESHOLD TEST BAN TREATY, AND THE REVIEW OF THE OPERATION OF THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY--THE QUESTION OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS FOR PEACEFUL

PURPOSES HAS ONLY RECENTLY BECOME A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL ISSUE.

2. AT THE 1974 UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, MANY DELEGATIONS NOTED THAT IN APPROACHING THE OVERALL QUESTION OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES, IT WAS NECESSARY

TO WEIGH CAREFULLY, AND PERHAPS TO BALANCE AGAINST ONE ANOTHER, MANY DIVERSE FACTORS--AMONG THEM ECONOMIC UTILITY, TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY, HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS, LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDING EXISTING TREATY OBLIGATIONS, AND ARMS CONTROL IMPLICATIONS. IT WAS GENERALLY RECOGNIZED, HOWEVER, THAT CURRENT INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF SEVERAL OF THESE FACTORS WAS FAR FROM COMPLETE.

3. ON THE ISSUE OF ECONOMIC UTILITY, FOR EXAMPLE, A NUMBER OF DELEGATIONS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT TO DATE PNES HAD FAILED TO MEET EARLY EXPECTATIONS. MY DELEGATION POINTED OUT THAT, DESPITE CONSIDERABLE EFFORTS IN PNE DEVICE DESIGN AND SOME APPLICATION EXPERIMENTS, THE UNITED STATES HAD NOT YET REALIZED ANY COMMERCIAL BENEFITS FROM PNE TECHNOLOGY. AT THE SAME TIME, IT WAS WIDELY RECOGNIZED THAT USE OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES WAS STILL IN THE EXPERIMENTAL STAGE, AND THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF ACHIEVING SUBSTANTIAL BENEFITS IN THE FUTURE COULD NOT BE ALTOGETHER EXCLUDED.

4. ON THE QUESTION OF ARMS CONTROL IMPLICATIONS, MANY DELEGATIONS WERE AWARE OF THE POTENTIAL CONFLICT BETWEEN THE USE OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES AND THE PROMOTION OF IMPORTANT ARMS CONTROL OBJECTIVES, PARTICULARLY PREVENTING THE FURTHER SPREAD OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND PLACING FURTHER RESTRAINTS ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING. HOWEVER, THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE UNCERTAINTY AND SOME DIFFERENCE OF OPINION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS COULD BE CARRIED OUT IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THOSE OBJECTIVES AND, IF SO, THE CIRCUMSTANCES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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UNDER WHICH THIS COULD BE DONE.

5. IN THE COURSE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE IT BECAME APPARENT THAT OVERALL ASSESSMENTS AND POLICY PRESCRIPTIONS WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT FURTHER EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE REMAINING UNCERTAINTIES. WELL-INFORMED TRADE-OFFS AMONG THE VARIOUS AND POTENTIALLY COMPETING CONSIDERATIONS SIMPLY COULD NOT BE MADE WITHOUT A CLEARER DERSTANDING OF EACH OF THE SEPARATE CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED. ACCORDINGLY, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DECIDED, IN THE FORM OF RESOLUTION 3261 D (XXIX), ON A DIVISION OF LABOR FOR FURTHER EXAMINATION OF THE DIVERSE COMPONENT PARTS OF THE PNE QUESTION.

6. THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY WAS ASKED TO CONTINUE ITS STUDIES OF THE UTILITY AND FEASIBILITY OF PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS, INCLUDING THEIR LEGAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY ASPECTS. THE REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY WAS REQUESTED TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO THE ROLE OF PNES AS PROVIDED FOR IN THAT TREATY. FINALLY,

THIS COMMITTEE WAS CALLED UPON TO EXAMINE THOSE ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM FALLING WITHIN ITS PARTICULAR AREA OF EXPERTISE--THE ARMS CONTROL IMPLICATIONS OF PNES.

7. THE INFORMAL MEETINGS WITH EXPERTS NEXT WEEK WILL GIVE US AN OPPORTUNITY TO WORK TOWARD FULFILLING THE CCD'S PART OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S MANDATE. TODAY, IN PREPARATION FOR THOSE INFORMAL MEETINGS, I WOULD LIKE TO OUTLINE MY GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS ON THE PRINCIPAL ISSUES THAT WE BELIEVE SHOULD BE COVERED IN THE COMMITTEE'S CONSIDERATION OF THE ARMS CONTROL IMPLICATIONS OF PNES AND TO TABLE A WORKING PAPER THAT TREATS THOSE ISSUES IN GREATER DETAIL.

8. MR. CHAIRMAN, BASIC TO ANY EXAMINATION OF THE ARMS CONTROL IMPLICATIONS OF PNES IS AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF ALL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICES, WHETHER INTENDED FOR PEACEFUL OR MILITARY PURPOSES. AS IS POINTED OUT IN THE US WORKING PAPER, THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL OF THESE CHARACTERISTICS IS THAT ALL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES RELEASE EXTREMELY LARGE AMOUNTS OF ENERGY FROM A RELATIVELY SMALL AND LIGHT PACKAGE IN AN EXTREMELY SHORT PERIOD OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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TIME. MOREOVER, THE WEIGHT AND EXTERNAL DIMENSIONS OF ALL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICES CONSIDERED BY THE US FOR EITHER MILITARY OR ENGINEERING APPLICATIONS ARE SUCH THAT THEY COULD ALL BE DELIVERED TO MILITARY TARGETS, ALTHOUGH WITH VARYING DEGREES OF EFFICIENCY, BY A WIDE RANGE OF EXISTING LAND, SEA, OR AIR VEHICLES.

9. WE THEREFORE DO NOT SEE HOW NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICES COULD BE DEVELOPED THAT WOULD NOT BE CAPABLE OF MILITARY APPLICATION. ALL EXISTING OR FORESEEABLE NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICES DESIGNED FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES COULD BE EMPLOYED IN SOME FASHION AS A WEAPON, ALTHOUGH IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT THAT SUCH DEVICES WOULD NOT NECESSARILY ADD SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE MILITARY CAPABILITY OF NUCLEAR WEAPON TESTING STATES THAT ALREADY POSSESS A BROAD RANGE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS DELIVERY SYSTEMS AND NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICES WELL-SUITED TO THOSE SYSTEMS.

10. FROM THE STANDPOINT OF ARMS CONTROL, THE CHIEF CONCERN IN NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES IS THEIR

POTENTIAL FOR CONTRIBUTING TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPABILITIES. AN IMPORTANT ARMS CONTROL OBJECTIVE SHOULD THEREFORE BE TO ACHIEVE ADEQUATE ASSURANCE THAT A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION PROGRAM CARRIED OUT FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES DOES NOT PROVIDE NUCLEAR WEAPONS-RELATED BENEFITS OTHERWISE NOT AVAILABLE TO THE STATE CONDUCTING THE PROGRAM. IT IS AN OBJECTIVE THAT CAN AND SHOULD BE APPLIED TO ALL STATES. THE US WORKING PAPER EXAMINES FIRST THE CASE OF STATES THAT HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY

DEMONSTRATED A NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE CAPABILITY, AND THEN THE CASE OF EXISTING NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES, TO DETERMINE IN EACH CASE WHETHER AND TO WHAT EXTENT THIS OBJECTIVE CAN BE ACHIEVED.

11. GIVEN THE DESIRE OF ALL STATES TO ENJOY THE FULLEST POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY, A CRITICAL QUESTION IS WHETHER IT IS POSSIBLE FOR A STATE PREVIOUSLY WITHOUT A NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE CAPABILITY TO CARRY OUT A PNE PROGRAM WITHOUT IN THE PROCESS ACHIEVING A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPABILITY. AS THE WORKING PAPER POINTS OUT, THERE IS NO RELIABLE MEANS OF CONSTRAINING A PNE PROGRAM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BY A "NON-NUCLEAR WEAPON STATE" SO AS TO PREVENT THE ACQUISITION OF A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPABILITY. THE UNAVOIDABLE CONSEQUENCE OF ANY TEST THAT RESULTS SUCCESSFULLY IN A NUCLEAR DETONATION IS TO PROVIDE THE TESTING STATE WITH CONFIDENCE IN THE EXPLOSIVE CAPABILITY OF A DEVICE THAT COULD BE USED AS A WEAPON.

12. THE WORKING PAPER GOES ON TO EXAMINE VARIOUS SUGGESTIONS AIMED AT PREVENTING A PNE PROGRAM FROM LEADING TO A USABLE NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPABILITY--INCLUDING CONSTRAINTS ON DEVICE CHARACTERISTICS, RESTRICTIONS ON THE ACQUISITION OF DELIVERY SYSTEMS, AND PHYSICAL CONTROL OF ALL SPECIAL NUCLEAR MATERIALS. IT CONCLUDES THAT NONE OF THESE METHODS PROVIDES A RELIABLE BASIS FOR DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN A "PNE POWER" AND A NUCLEAR WEAPON STATE.

13. ON THE BASIS OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS, THE WORKING PAPER ASSERTS THAT THE OBJECTIVE OF PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE CARRYING OUT OF A PNE PROGRAM BY A NON-NUCLEAR WEAPON STATE. IT WAS THIS CONCLUSION, OF COURSE, WHICH LED TO THE PROHIBITION, IN ARTICLE II OF THE NPT, OF THE ACQUISITION OF "NUCLEAR WEAPONS OR OTHER NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICES." HOWEVER, IT WAS FULLY UNDERSTOOD AT THE TIME OF THE NPT NEGOTIATIONS THAT THIS IMPORTANT ARMS CONTROL IMPLICATION OF PNES SHOULD NOT STAND IN THE WAY OF NON-NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES RECEIVING THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF PNE TECHNOLOGY. ACCORDINGLY, ARTICLE V WAS DESIGNED TO ASSURE STATES THAT GIVE UP THE

OPTION TO ACQUIRE ANY NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICE THAT THEY WILL NOT BE DENIED ANY BENEFITS OF PNE TECHNOLOGY THAT ARE REALIZED BY THE NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES PARTY TO THE NPT.

14. THE US WORKING PAPER IS BASED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE PRINCIPAL ARMS CONTROL OBJECTIVE REGARDING PNES SHOULD BE PURSUED JUST AS SCRUPULOUSLY IN THE CASE OF NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES AS IN THE CASE OF NON-NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES. THUS, IT IS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE ADEQUATE ASSURANCE THAT NUCLEAR WEAPON STATE PNE PROGRAMS DO NOT PROVIDE NUCLEAR WEAPONS-RELATED BENEFITS OTHERWISE NOT AVAILABLE TO THOSE STATES. WHETHER OR NOT A PNE PROGRAM CARRIED OUT BY A NUCLEAR WEAPON STATE WOULD PROVIDE SUCH WEAPONS-RELATED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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BENEFITS WOULD DEPEND ON SEVERAL FACTORS, INCLUDING THE EXTENT AND CHARACTER OF THAT STATE'S EXISTING NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPABILITIES, THE LEVEL OF ITS PNE ACTIVITY COMPARED TO THE LEVEL OF ITS WEAPONS TESTING PROGRAM, AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ANY CONSTRAINTS ON ITS PNE PROGRAM.

15. THE WORKING PAPER NOTES THAT IF WEAPONS TESTING WERE LIMITED BY INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT WHILE PNES WERE NOT CONSTRAINED, THE POTENTIAL WOULD BE CREATED FOR USING THE PNE PROGRAM TO ACHIEVE WEAPON-RELATED BENEFITS NO LONGER AVAILABLE IN THE WEAPONS TESTING PROGRAM. THEREFORE, IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE ACQUISITION OF SUCH MILITARY BENEFITS, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO PLACE STRICT CONTROLS ON PNES AS WELL. SUCH CONSTRAINTS ARE CURRENTLY BEING WORKED OUT BY THE TWO PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE LIMITATION OF UNDERGROUND NUCLEAR WEAPON TESTS. WHILE IT IS TOO EARLY TO PREDICT THE CONTENT OF THE PNE AGREEMENT CALLED FOR IN ARTICLE III OF THE THRESHOLD TREATY, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT IT CONTAIN ADEQUATELY VERIFIABLE CONSTRAINTS CAPABLE OF ENSURING THAT PNES ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THAT TREATY.

16. UNDER A COMPREHENSIVE BAN ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING, THE OBJECTIVE OF PREVENTING THE ACQUISITION OF WEAPON-RELATED BENEFITS FROM A PNE PROGRAM, WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY MORE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE. SINCE THERE WOULD BE NO AUTHORIZED WEAPONS TESTING, INCENTIVES FOR SEEKING MILITARY BENEFITS IN THE COURSE OF A PNE PROGRAM WOULD BE MUCH GREATER THAN UNDER A THRESHOLD/PNE REGIME.

17. IF PNES WERE TO BE ACCOMMODATED UNDER A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN, A VERIFICATION SYSTEM WOULD HAVE TO BE DEvised THAT WOULD BE CAPABLE OF PROVIDING ADEQUATE ASSURANCE THAT PNES WERE NOT BEING USED TO TEST A NEW WEAPON CONCEPT, TO VERIFY THE PERFORMANCE OF WEAPONS ALREADY IN THE STOCKPILE, OR TO CONDUCT STUDIES OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS EFFECTS.

IN ASSESSING THE FEASIBILITY OF ACCOMMODATING PNES, IT IS
IMPORTANT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OTHER INFORMATION AND EX-
PERIENCE GAINED IN A PNE PROGRAM THAT COULD BE OF MILITARY
VALUE. THE WORKING PAPER CONCLUDES THAT FURTHER CON-
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SIDERATION OF THESE DIFFICULT AND COMPLEX VERIFICATION
ISSUES COULD PROVIDE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW IT
MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE ADEQUATE ASSURANCE THAT
NUCLEAR WEAPONS-RELATED BENEFITS WERE NOT OBTAINED IF PNES
WERE TO BE PERMITTED UNDER A COMPREHENSIVE WEAPONS TEST
BAN.

18. MR. CHAIRMAN, IT WOULD BE UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT NEXT
WEEK'S INFORMAL MEETINGS WITH EXPERTS TO RESOLVE ALL RE-
MAINING UNCERTAINTIES ABOUT THE ARMS CONTROL IMPLICATIONS
OF PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS. HOWEVER, MY DELEGATION
BELIEVES THAT SEVERAL OF THE IMPORTANT ISSUES--ISSUES THAT
ARE ESSENTIAL TO A WELL-INFORMED ASSESSMENT OF THE OVERALL
PNE QUESTION--COULD BE CLARIFIED CONSIDERABLY IN THE COURSE
OF THE EXPERTS' DISCUSSIONS. WE WOULD HOPE THE UNITED
STATES WORKING PAPER WILL HELP FACILITATE SUCH DISCUSSIONS
AND OUR EXPERTS ARE COMING TO GENEVA PREPARED TO MAKE A
CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTION. END TEXT. INGERSOLL UNQUOTE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, ARMS CONTROL MEETINGS, PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE161181
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ACDA/IR:REINHORN
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750241-0908
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197507104/baaaaosz.tel
Line Count: 301
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ACDA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 APR 2003 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <22 OCT 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: PARM, TECH, US, CCD
To: MOSCOW
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006